

Tahiti: Isle of Dreams

here, where still scarcely a modern
building spoils
the picture and you can count the
white settlers
on your fingers, lies dreaming before
you one of the
real homes of the Polynesian people,
the haven,
more than likely, from which the
historic fleet
sailed in A.D. 1350 for the colonisation
of New
Zealand.

Has any other race, I wonder, a
more romantic
story than the Polynesian ?—romantic
not only in
its web and woof, but in the very
reading and
recording. The Polynesian Society was
formed in
time to read that record ere it perished
utterly, and
to men like Mr. Percy Smith, its first
President, and
Judge Fornander of Hawaii, those of us
who care
to learn owe all. So far as I am
personally con-
cerned, it was to the former's little book
"Hawaii"
that I went when, in Papeari itself, the
enchant-
ment of this great and (in Eastern
Polynesia) all
but vanished people first took hold
upon me.

Briefly, then, it is possible to look back
to the
basin of the Ganges with Buddha
scarcely dead-
four hundred and fifty years before
Christ—for
the appearance in history of this
wonderful race.
Earlier than that it is scarcely useful
to go, for to
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